

Amendments to drawing figures

Please replace sheet 1 of the drawings with the attached revised sheet in which the numeral "200" has been added to Figure 2.

REMARKS

Appreciation is extended to the examiner for the recognition of allowable subject matter in method claims 7 and 9-12 as originally presented. Also, the fact that the examiner has not issued a prior art rejection of claims 13-20 is likewise noted with appreciation.

A replacement sheet 1 of drawings is submitted herewith to meet the examiner's objection concerning the failure to include a reference number for the macro gate array 200. The examiner will note that this reference number has now been added to Figure 2 to fully overcome the objection.

The objection to the disclosure because of the failure to define LEF and GDS has now been overcome by the replacement of the appropriate paragraph on page 11 of the specification with these terms suitably defined.

The various rejections of claims 2-6, 8 and 13-20 under 35 USC 112 have now been overcome by cancellation of claims 2 and 4, and amendments to claims 8 and 13. The expression "densely obstructed macro" in claim 2 has been replaced with language that makes it clear that the circuit wires must be routed around the macro rather than through it. The specification at page 2, lines 2-6, supports this language. Claim 4 has been canceled with the subject matter incorporated into claim 1 to clarify that the functionality refers to the blocks, not the slices. Page 4 at lines 8-11 provides support for this language. In claim 8, wording has been changed to conform more closely to the language in the specification at page 5, line 12, and page 9, lines 4 and 5. The amendment to claim 13 clarifies the fact that the wiring channels pass through each slice and that the channels correspond to the number of wires or circuit lines that are required to pass through each slice to deliver signals between a driver on one side of a macro and a destination on the other side. The expression

"densely obstructed" when referring to the macro means that the amount of metal in the metal in the macro prevents or greatly impedes the passage of wires through the macros. However, the use of the slices incorporated into the macros provides the requisite number of passageways for the wires.

The examiner has rejected claims 1-3 as anticipated by the Schulz et al (EP 0 271 596 A1) reference. However, applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 as now amended is distinguishable over Schulz et al, in that claim 1 has been amended to include the contents of claims 2, 3 and 4, which are now cancelled. Inasmuch as claim 4 was not rejected on the prior art, applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 should be allowed.

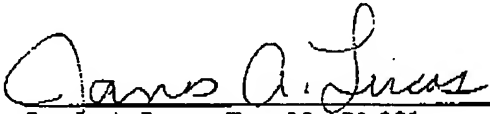
In addition, although Schulz et al and the present invention share commonality of language, they are directed to different inventive concepts. A close reading of Schulz et al shows that it refers to the 'arrays' particularly in claim 13 as "...having formal functions, and existing during processing for design purposes and being resolvable in the final design stage." Thus, these arrays of Schulz et al can hardly be considered as a "field programmable gate array" as described in applicants' description and as now incorporated into claim 1. Furthermore, Schulz et al describe a partition comprised of a number of different electrical elements and arrays. Nowhere does the patent describe a programmable gate array of the type being used by applicants.

The examiner has not rejected any of the claims 5, 6, 8 and 13-20 based on the prior art. Accordingly, assuming that the amendments to the claims being made to overcome the Section 112 rejections are satisfactory, applicants respectfully submit that these claims should likewise be in condition for allowance along with claims 7 and 9-12.

Applicants submit that the specification, claims and drawings have now been amended to provide for internal consistency. Where necessary, the specification and claims have been amended or explained to overcome the problems of indefiniteness. If indeed there are any further issues that must be resolved before allowance of the application, the examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned, either by phone, fax or email.

Respectfully submitted,

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James A. Lucas, Reg. No. 21,081
Driggs, Lucas, Brubaker & Hogg Co., L.P.A.
CUSTOMER NO. 26681